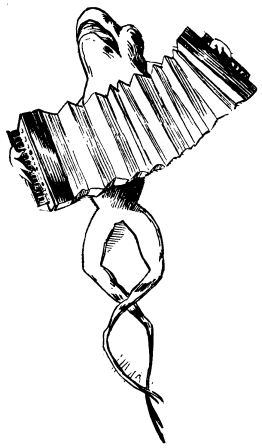

The 21st Century Organ Series

Playing the Insignia™ & Allegiant™ Rodgers Organs

Lauren Gadd
Noel Jones, AAGO

Frog Music Press

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Acknowledgements

Thanks to Chad Perry, Rick Anderson and Dr. Jeanine Cansler who liked the idea of a book with music about playing the Insignia organs; to Ed Wilson, Pete Buxton, Dan Miller and Rodney Barbour who answered our questions; and to Rodgers for creating the Insignia Series of Organs.

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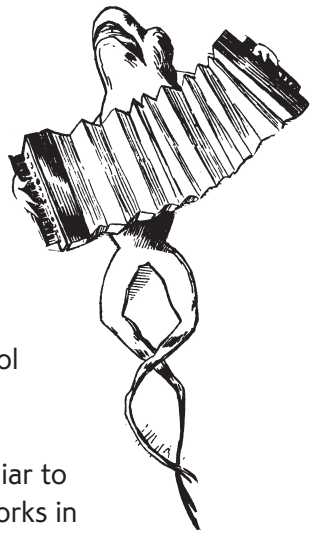
About the Authors

Lauren Gadd and Noel Jones have been collaborating at Frog Music Press from East Tennessee but fall back upon a multi-national background in church music.

Lauren was born in England to an American military family. Much of her musical training came from her mother, a church organist. Her later musical education involved classical musical composition, as well as walking backwards while leading her high school marching band.



Lauren's name is familiar to many for her organ works in *Pedalpoint* and other publications by LifeWay, who has recently released a collection of her organ works called, *Christ, We Adore Thee.* Lauren's hobbies right now appear to be adjusting from enjoying having children to having a grandchild.

Noel spent time in a military band (cymbals and piano in the dance band) in Germany, after studying organ in New York City. He remained in Europe, studying in Germany and Italy, working as a conductor and vocal coach in musicals and opera.

Back in the United States he began designing and doing tonal finishing on organs and teaching organists registration and MIDI skills. He is studying Baroque Cello.

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Playing the Rodgers Insignia & Alleigiant Organs

Using this book.

For centuries organ builders have built organs and passed on inside information to the organist about the organ that will be their musical partner. Every organ is built to a vision, a vision of the music that the organ will be playing.

To help you explore the musical possibilities of this organ, we have created this book as a map that explores places for you to go, things to see. Before taking a trip it is helpful to study a guide book and get an idea of what you want to do when you get there. Some people find themselves in places and then buy a guide book to figure out what they are seeing every day. This book works the same way, it can serve as an introduction to the instrument or provide insight for the person who is already playing an Insignia. .

What places are we going to visit? Rather than museums and coffee houses, we are going to visit music. Music that we can play. Music that explores the sound of the voices of this organ.

You do not need to read this book or the owner's manual to play the organ. It is designed as a straightforward classical organ, built to AGO standards, which means that everything is laid out in a logical place and that the console is ergonomically designed to ease playing of the manuals and pedals. The AGO design was established in the mid 20th-century long before 'ergonomic' became a household word.

Organs which rely on electricity for power and control often have a window into the workings of the organ, in this case we call it a Display Window. When you power the organ up, it displays a wait message. When the organ is prepared for playing, the Transposer Window appears. This window opens when told to, by you, to provide additional pipe organs sounds, orchestral voices such as Orchestral Oboe, Harpsichord, Trumpets and Timpani. The window also let's you configure these voices to suit the music you are going to be playing.

Why isn't this all simpler? Why have a window? Anyone can operate a microwave to pop popcorn and heat water for coffee. Microwave designers must get awfully frustrated designing a cooking device that can assist in preparing gourmet feasts...when purchasers end up just using it to pop popcorn. Microwave cookbooks gather dust, sitting on the shelf unread.

This organ has a display window to make going beyond the basics easy. Every change that you wish to make in the window is simple as 1, 2, 3. You never go beyond three layers to get where you are going. 1. Open the Window, 2. Choose the Option, 3. Select the Option. It's that easy. It's designed to make it simple for you to make music.

Since this book was origianlly written, the Allegiant Organs have been introduced. There are a few additions to the Allegiant, more piston memories, for example, otherwise they are identical with the Insiginia in operation and everything in this book applies to them as well.

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The Users Menu, PR-300 MIDI Basic Keyboard Chart, Cresecendo and Tutti Chart within the Appendix are ©Rodgers Instruments LLC and they, along with the terms Insignia™, PR-300 and Rodgers Organs™ appear here with the kind permission of Rodgers Instruments LLC.

1 Understanding the Console Display

Device — Console Display

Console Display — When the organ is powered on the **Console Display** lights and reads:

RODGERS i557/577

Once it completes automatic diagnostic procedures you will see the window display change to read:

TRANSPOSER Ø

This indicates that all is well with the organ and you can now play.

This display window is used in many ways. It is your window into the workings of the organ. At this point it indicates that the organ transposer is set to the default neutral position Ø.

Reach over to the right and grasp the SELECT knob. Turn it one click to the left and note that the **Console Display** now reads:

TRANSPOSER -1

The organ will now play everything one-half step lower than written automatically. To reset the organ to normal pitch, find, and using your right thumb, push the General Cancel piston ⓪ underneath the lower keyboard on the right. The **Console Display** will now read:

TRANSPOSER Ø

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2 Choosing Stops

Device Using Rocker Tablets and Drawknobs

Rocker Tabs

To activate a stop: Press the bottom half of the **rocker tab** until the light comes on, then release. The stop will return to vertical position, and remain lit.

To silence a stop: Press the top half of the **rocker tab** until the light goes off, then release. The stop will return to vertical position

Drawknobs

To activate a stop: Pull the **drawknob** until the light goes on, then release. The stop will remain lit.

To silence a stop: Push the **drawknob** until the light goes off, then release.

The Music: The *Echo Voluntary* contrasts the sounds of a Flute and String Celeste. In a work like this, it is customary to pause between phrases, giving you time to change the stops, and to enhance the echo effect.

Advanced Technique: Choose the Great Gedeckt 8'. Play this piece differently by going to the Great Keyboard whenever the music indicates playing the Swell Bourdon.

You will find that most of the time when playing church organ you will be using both hands on the same keyboard, especially when playing hymns. To give a correct balance to all voices in the music, unless there is a melody to be brought out by reaching with one hand to another manual.

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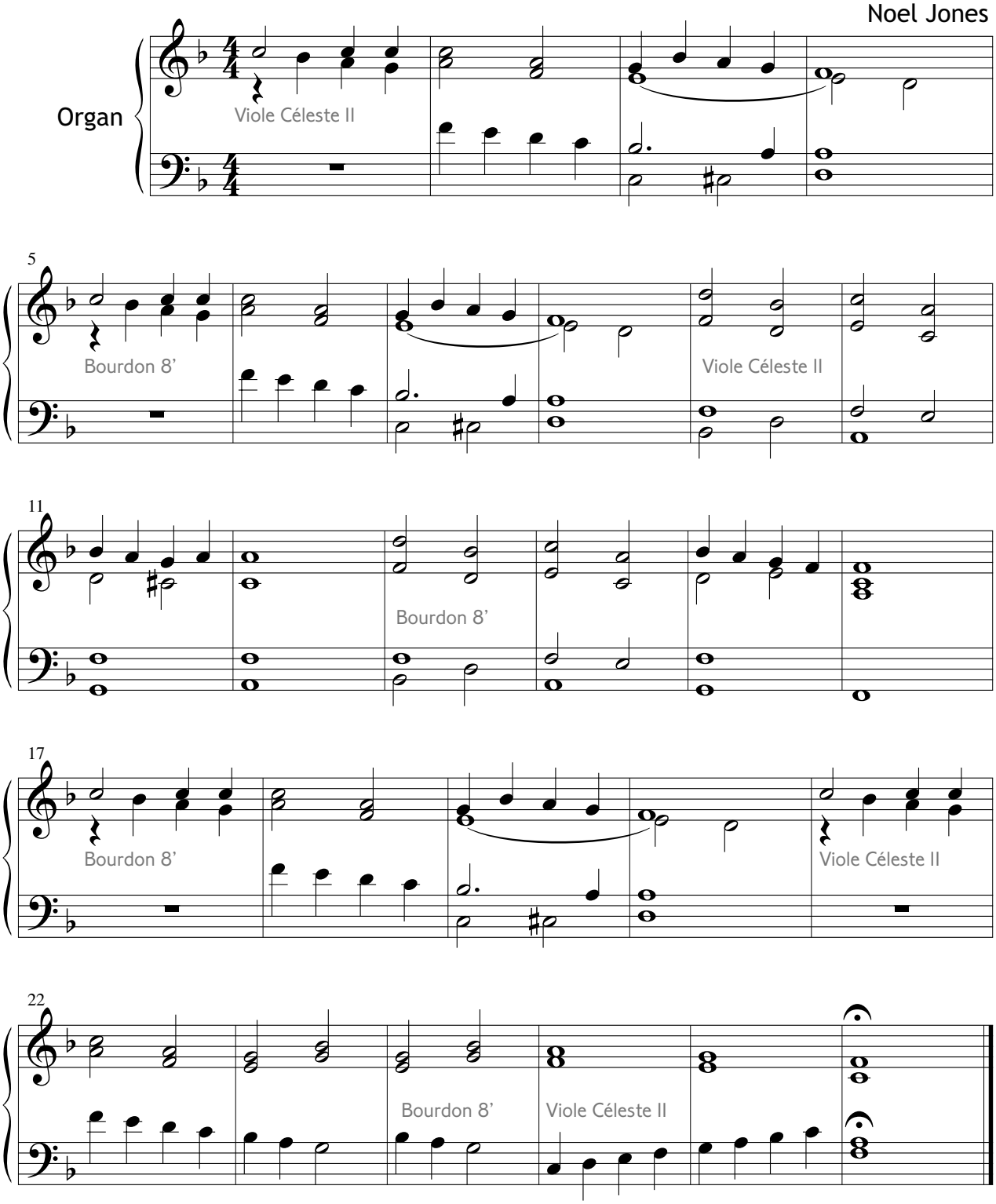
Echo Voluntary

Noel Jones

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3

General Cancel

Device

Piston ⓪

Canceling Stops

Use your right thumb to press the ⓪ piston. Pistons are arranged so that they fall under the thumb when your fingers are over the keys above, making it simple to reach under the manual with the thumb to make changes.

Organists make a habit of clearing all stops using the **General Cancel** Piston at the end of each piece.

General Cancel also automatically resets the Transposer to Ø.

Using the **General Cancel** Piston helps eliminate those embarrassing moments during prayer and sermons when you accidentally brush a key, drop a hymnal onto the keyboard, or step on a pedal while getting off the bench.

However, if you use the Crescendo Pedal option, described later, the **General Cancel** will not clear it, leaving the Crescendo Pedal Activated.

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